



## Commonwealth of Kentucky Energy and Environment Cabinet

Steve Beshear, Governor

Leonard K. Peters, Secretary

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### **Twenty Years of the Kentucky Heritage Land Conservation Fund Celebrated in Photos**

*Book highlighting conservation areas now available*

**FRANKFORT, Ky. (July 3, 2014)** – Award-winning Kentucky nature photographer Dr. Thomas G. Barnes has published a new book, *Kentucky, Naturally*, in celebration of the properties that have been purchased with the assistance of the Kentucky Heritage Land Conservation Fund (KHLCHF) during the first 20 years of the program.

The book displays hundreds of beautiful photographs of the state's protected lands, and provides detailed descriptions of each site including the natural flora and fauna. The book is now available in local bookstores, Kentucky state park gift shops, and on Amazon.com.

"There's nothing I love more than spending time outdoors in the Commonwealth and *Kentucky, Naturally* showcases the best of Kentucky's natural beauty," said First Lady Jane Beshear, "This book will drive readers to experience our state's outdoor splendor in person, and to appreciate the work of the Kentucky Heritage Land Conservation Fund."

"Author and photographer Tom Barnes is truly an artist whose paintbrush is a camera. *Kentucky, Naturally* will beguile you with scenes and descriptions of intriguing places here in the Commonwealth, with revealing close-ups of wildlife and wildflowers like Indian paintbrush, monkey faced orchids, great blue herons, ribbon snakes and shining ladies' tresses, to name a few," said Don Dott, director of the Kentucky State Nature Preserves Commission and KHLCHF board member. "With locations and directions, this book is also a hiking guide that will guide the reader along these pristine preserves. If you appreciate the beauty of nature, you will love this book! Let it introduce you to Kentucky's best."

"Only Tom Barnes could do such an inspirational and accurate job of showcasing the people and places conserved through the Heritage Conservation Fund Board's programs, staff

and supporters,” said Hugh Archer, director of the Kentucky Natural Lands Trust and KHLCHF board member. “His understanding of the conservation community and its best scientists make him an expert on where the wild things are, and how they are being protected or in need of attention.”

The KHLCHF was established in 1994 to protect the Commonwealth’s natural resources and keep its wild ecosystems intact. Reports indicate that more than 105 acres of rural land every day are lost to land conversion, and the state ranks fifth highest in the projected amount of rural land that will be converted to other uses in the future. By 2013, through the efforts of the KHLCHF board and many others, the program helped protect more than 120 properties in 67 counties totaling 85,000 acres.

### **About the Author**

Thomas G. Barnes, Ph.D., is a full professor in the Department of Forestry at the University of Kentucky. Dr. Barnes has written extensively on the natural history of Kentucky and has authored more than 50 scientific research articles, 60 cooperative extension publications and 100 magazine articles. His book, *Kentucky’s Last Great Places*, was nominated for the Kentucky Literary Award in non-fiction. Other published books include *Gardening for the Birds*, *The Wildflowers and Ferns of Kentucky*, *The Rare Wildflowers of Kentucky*, *The Gift of Creation—Images from Scripture and Earth*, and *How to Find and Photograph Kentucky Wildflowers*.

The KHLCHF is funded in part by the sale of “Nature’s Finest” license plates. For more information, visit the Kentucky Heritage Land Conservation Fund website at <http://heritageland.ky.gov> or contact Zeb Weese at 502-564-2320.

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